

Who is the Real Culprit Behind the September 11 Attacks on the World Trade Center?

By Han De-qiang, Economist, China Aerospace University

China and the World

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On the morning of September 11th 2001, four Boeing jet planes were hijacked – two destroyed the New York World Trade Center, one damaged the Pentagon and the other crashed near Pittsburgh. When the news broke out, I was in a college cafeteria near Boston. Shock and panic filled every corner of the college. The big screen TV in the room repeatedly broadcasted the heavily emotional headline “America under attack” and the scene of the plane crashing into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. What? Everyone, myself included, felt a complete sense of disbelief. Only four days ago I was at the World Trade Square watching a free ballet, a parody version of “Swan Lake,” laughing with an audience of all skin colors. Then a landmark as famous as the World Trade Center just suddenly vanished from the face of the earth. Unthinkable as it seemed, this fact became increasingly difficult to deny. Television networks continued coverage of every new development: the White House, Congress and the State Department had all been evacuated; the New York Stock Exchange was closed and all air traffic was grounded. Soon afterwards, our college authorities announced that all classes were suspended and all high-rise buildings closed down. But students did not all leave immediately; we chatted and discussed who was the culprit and how to punish them. Slowly and steadily, I also sorted out my thoughts.

Oil Is the Source of U.S. Wealth

About 20 days before that, I went to the United States for the first time. I landed at Kennedy Airport and a friend of mine picked me up. Driving me into town and pointing out the famous landmarks of New York along the way, he soon took me to his house in a nice residential area. I was surprised. My friend was only an ordinary employee of the United Nations--how could he own such a “luxury” home in New York? His was a small house with two stories above the ground and a basement, and each floor was about 100 square meters. There was a front lawn and a backyard. Thick carpet covered the bedrooms, the living room, study, dining room, stairways, and even the kitchen and bathrooms. The furniture and furnishings were not exactly luxurious and expensive, but very elegant and comfortable. My friend said this was a typical house in America and that here in the United States, university professors, white-collar workers and even truck drivers who were trade union members could all have a house like this. I was still incredulous though.

Early next morning another friend who was studying at a college drove more than 300 kilometers to pick me up to take me to a conference. Driving along Highway 91, we saw endless trees along both sides of the road and all kinds of road signs whirling past. After

we entered the university campus, we were greeted by well-trimmed lawns and buildings of various shapes and sizes scattered across the grass. The apartment buildings were either two or three stories high, with one or more units on each floor, and could all be considered "luxury apartments" according to Chinese standards. My friend was doing his graduate studies at the time while working as a teaching assistant. He shared a large two-bedroom apartment with other people, which made somebody like myself envious as I had been living in a dormitory style room for almost ten years.

Later I went on to Los Angeles where I really experienced the spaciousness of American houses. Apart from a few high-rise buildings, Los Angeles is filled with two or three story frame houses sprawling across a broad area 100 km long and 70 km wide. Highways and overpasses zigzag across the city with countless cars speeding along roads like glistening belts under the sun.

If spaciousness was something I had not anticipated, I did expect to see cars in the United States. America is known as a country on wheels. But as our plane approached Los Angeles, the glittering reflection against the sun of the unending lines of cars that literally filled the city of Los Angeles still sent me into deep shock. The median income of American households is approximately \$40,000 a year (below the average income level) generally supporting one house and two cars. At the cost of \$1.50 per gallon, the mileage on a tank of gas could be 50 km. Assuming that each car would run 15,000 km a year, it would only cost around \$900, less than 2.5% of the yearly family income, which is almost nothing. In fact, the total number of cars in Los Angeles almost equals the total number of cars in all of China.

It seems obvious that if you do not come to the United States in person, you will not grasp the meaning of wealth. The 5% of the world population here consumes one third of the world's natural resources, a fact I had known long before this. But the manifestation of these abstract figures in every detail of daily life in the United States still left me with a deep impression. Big houses and comfortable cars here are a typical fact of American life. Actually, almost every detail of life I observed has the word "wealth" written all over it.

Walking into the famous Wal-Mart supermarket, you would see shoppers waiting at the cashier line with carts piled high with goods. If you look at the price tags, you would be amazed at how little everything costs here. Let's say the monthly income an American salary earner brings home is a little more than \$2,000 (i.e. mid-to-low income level). Then, the price of leather shoes starts from \$7.8 to \$20 or \$30 or to the high end where they cost around \$80 to \$90 per pair. Clothes are around the same price range. A pack of four Kodak rolls of 100 film, 24 prints, only costs over \$5.00. When I was in San Francisco, we had a neighboring family of four - the wife stays at home with two children while the husband who only had high school education worked. He started out by delivering pizzas, became a computer salesman and now had just lost his job. They should be ranked as a low-to-mid income family; but they are renting a two-bedroom apartment with cars and all necessary furniture. With such a high level of material consumption, it is no wonder that some senior cadre had at one point claimed: "Only the United States is a truly communist society." It is little wonder that our university students have their

minds so set on going abroad, and it should be no surprise that some people believe America has the best form of society that mankind could imagine.

However, American wealth can neither be reproduced nor sustained. A historian friend who teaches at a college in Maryland only agrees with the first part of this theory, i.e. China cannot possibly reproduce American wealth, but the kind of wealth produced in the United States is sustainable. His reason is that America is truly a powerful country with a vast area and a huge pool of untapped/untouched land and natural resources. I am opposed to that theory. I believe that U.S. wealth is sustained not only by its own resources but also by the resources of the world. It not only depends on resources that can be regenerated; it depends more heavily on resources that cannot be regenerated, e.g. crude oil. Oil is in fact the earth's solar energy accumulated over a period of more than a billion years. The massive exploitation and consumption of oil happened during the short period of 100 years after automobiles were invented, especially during the 50 odd years since World War II. But so far the amount of oil that can be exploited commercially has almost been exhausted. Without oil, cars, airplanes, heating and air-conditioning of bigger buildings would all be in crisis. Highways, gas stations, suburban shopping centers would all be reduced to ruins. The production assembly lines for ketchup sauce, clothes and cars could all grind to a stop. But my historian friend does not think so. He believes that Americans are very smart people. They know the importance and scarcity of oil so they have kept their own oil fields pretty much untouched while going all the way to the Middle East to purchase their oil. My counter theory to that is: this is only clever thinking at the best, not true wisdom, because even if we give all the oil of the whole world to the American consumers, it would last no more than 50 years. The really intelligent thinker is our Lao-Tse in China. He reached the conclusion 2500 years ago when he remarked that "strong winds will not last past morning and rapid rain will not last till the end of the day." The rampant style of American consumerism will come to an end sooner or later, possibly sooner than later.

I never would have anticipated that our debate would end with the destruction of the World Trade Center and damage to the Pentagon.

Oil and U.S. Middle East Policy

Oil has always been the bloodline of the United States, and therefore to ensure affordable oil provisions has become a long-term priority goal in U.S. foreign policy, which is exactly why the oil-rich barren desert in the Middle East has been fought over by all the major world powers. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has long been in the spotlight of world news, and Israel is America's tool in realizing its Middle East strategies.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict (of course it is more than just a conflict) has a long story behind it. Ever since the Jewish nation was conquered and dispersed by the Roman Empire over 2,000 years ago, the Jewish people have been without a country and scattered all over the world. Throughout history, the Jews have suffered oppression and abuse at the hands of all ruling nations and have become a scapegoat every time there is social unrest or economic crisis. But the Jewish people have proved to be a truly amazing

race. Regardless of where they reside, what languages they speak, what line of work they take up, they have remained faithful to their own religion and maintained their history and social customs.

Today, this nation-less group still remains. But the problem is, the cowardly Zionists have not had the courage to stand up against the strong nations that have been their real oppressors. Instead, they turned around to bully an even weaker Palestinian nation. They shrewdly took advantage of the British and American intention to control the region and pushed the Palestinians out of their homes with military force. The Zionists completely ignored the existence of Palestinians, and with military and financial backing from the British and the Americans, have been steadily killing and evacuating Palestinians out of their homes, creating, as a result, empty villages in their ethnic cleansing efforts.

At the beginning of 1947, the Jewish people only occupied 7% of Palestinian land, but by the end of 1950, they had taken more than 92% of the territory, making 700,000 Palestinians homeless. In the eyes of the Zionists, lives of the Palestinians had no value. David Ben Gurion even went so far as to say that he would sacrifice half of the German Jewish children's lives if that was the price to pay to bring the other half to Palestine. In this way, the Jewish people established a rather bizarre country called Israel. Israel also has no sound ground for its economic existence. To address the everlasting need to suppress Palestinian rebellions and expand their own breathing space, the Israelis have had to keep up a very costly military presence.

Why would the U.S. support such a notorious Zionist country as Israel? The Americans have also done their figures. U.S. supremacy over other countries in the world has been built on its strong military presence - in Japan and Taiwan in Asia, through their NATO ally countries in Europe, and Israel in the Middle East and Africa. In principle, it is not impossible to find a faithful ally in the Arab world, but those Arab kingdoms are normally not so efficient when it comes to ruling their people. So if and when the United States does need military deterrence to threaten a neighboring country, those countries will not be able to overcome the strong nationalistic sentiment among their people. In comparison, Israel is loyal and capable, and although the United States has to provide Israel almost ten billion dollars annually, it is still more cost-effective than trying to maintain an American military base with several hundred thousand troops and it faces less international disapproval.

Israel has successfully turned the Auschwitz Concentration Camp into a symbol of Jewish suffering and ground for establishing the nation of Israel. Israel was also successful in stopping the spread of the truth behind the slaughtering of Palestinians, and winning over compassion and support from the European and the United States mainstream media and their public alike. All this makes the U.S. Middle East policy more effectively deceptive.

The United States also takes a risk in supporting Israel. It is the risk of antagonizing and infuriating the Palestinians and the entire Arab world. U.S. strategy used to counter this risk is to play different Arab countries and different factions within those countries

against one another. As a result, the Arab world is too divided to form a credible threat against the Israelis and cannot be united enough to defend and exploit their own rich oil resources.

The kingdoms and emirates of the Arab world are often easily won over by U.S. carrots or conquered by the U.S. stick. Examples include Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Kuwait. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in particular have exerted a very pernicious influence because of their ample oil resources and small populations. To them, it would be good if the oil price is high, of course; but it would not be a big problem if the oil price is kept down because they could always increase oil output level to compensate. However, to bigger countries such as Iraq and Iran, low oil prices will not only cut down revenue, their long-term interests would also be affected negatively.

Without U.S. military support, countries like Saudi Arabia will support the policy of high oil prices, tempted with profits and threatened with force by Iraq and Iran. But with U.S. military backup, Saudi Arabia and its allies will turn against the high price policy. On a deeper level, Iraq and Iran are both nations oriented toward the ordinary people to a large extent, so they will inevitably take a longer view when considering their national interests. But monarchical kingdoms and emirates are more into short-term gains. Therefore, the Gulf War between Iraq and Kuwait appeared to be a war over territories on the surface, it was really Iraq waging a war against a U.S. puppet in the Persian Gulf region, and furthermore a war against U.S. rule in the Middle East. The Gulf War might have seemed to be a civilized war for the defense of international peace, but it was in reality a war for the defense of low oil prices and the U.S. lifestyle. Deep underneath, it was a barbarian war where the fit and strong destroyed the weak. But the monopolized control of world opinion through the dominant Western media made it possible for the U.S. military to cover up what they had been doing in the Gulf; however, the people and intellectuals of the Arabic world cannot be fooled.

The strong sentiment and energy running against Israel, against the United States, and against the West have been growing extremely fast and gaining enormous momentum, and one group firmly believes that there is no other way to influence and change the United States and the West except through tit-for-tat actions - "teeth for teeth and blood for blood." Only then can they force the Americans to acknowledge the existence of the Arab people. To achieve this goal, the only way is a Jihad against America.

In view of such extreme imbalance of military power, the only way for this Jihad is through asymmetrical war or war without limit, including suicidal attacks and special warfare tactics regardless of timing, location, occasion or methods of attacks. The Americans call this war a terrorist war, but the executors believe it is a just war against injustice, a just war based upon the spirit of self-sacrifice and high idealism. Do you still remember the theme song in the [Chinese] film "Railway Guerrillas"? -- "We climb onto military trucks to capture machine guns; we break into trains and bomb bridges, just like sharp daggers stabbing into the enemy's hearts; we send the devils running and scare them senseless..."

America's Revenge and Future

To untie a dead knot takes one who tied it. To avoid a repeat of the World Trade Center attacks, the United States must review and reflect on its foreign policies over a long period of history. They also must review their rampant life style and social structure. However, it will undoubtedly be very difficult to do. All the Americans I have met are very friendly; some of them are concerned about the underprivileged social groups in their country; or they are active unionists; or they are strong environmentalists. But when they witnessed the destruction of the World Trade Center, their reaction showed no difference from other ordinary Americans. They were saddened, angry and indignant. It is hard for them to come to terms with the fact that the comfortable cars and big houses they are so proud of are the real culprits of this event. If people in this group reacted this way, it is even harder to expect the ordinary American folks to sit down and reflect on this conclusion.

So the only choice left is to wage a bloody revenge in the name of defending civilization. U.S. President Bush made it very clear when he said, "The United States of America will mobilize all possible resources to conquer our enemy.... We will never allow our enemy to change our life style or limit our freedoms. They shall never win this war." Bush came into power with the combined support of the military and financial industries and is himself a bellicose person. When faced with a crisis like this, all he could think about was sending two aircraft carriers to the New York harbor, bombing his imagined terrorist camps, and pushing through his National Missile Defense plan. He never thought about the irrationality and un-sustainability of the American life style.

However, revenge will only bring about bigger revenges in a vicious cycle. To a certain extent, this will not be an international war of revenge. In an age of globalization, this will be an internal war, a war between the world ruling class and the ruled, between the oppressors and the oppressed, between the humiliating and the humiliated. Should the United States destroy Afghanistan and Palestinian in its willful bombing campaigns regardless of rational thinking, it will inevitably face a huge people's war staged by peoples of the Arabic world and other Third World countries against the United States. The United States government will start with denying entry visas to Arabs, then to peoples of other Third World nations, and will eventually cause a deep split in a multi-ethnic America. This would become the deepest split that America has ever seen and will reduce a freedom-loving, democratic America to an authoritarian slave regime. Eventually the American ruling elite will be so divided among themselves that the United States will witness its own final demise. However, if America stops its present campaign, then the "terrorist elements" will be encouraged to stage a new wave of attacks.

Indeed it seems that there is really no free lunch anywhere in the world. Either the American ruling class makes important concessions, or their country will be destroyed along with its enemies in this vicious cycle. The United States, a country viewed as God's most favored nation under the sun, will have to pay the ultimate price for all that it has enjoyed.